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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. MONGBE	(Benin)
later:	Mr. RYSINSKI (Vice-Chairman)	(Poland)
later:	Mr. MONGBE (Chairman)	(Benin)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 91: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

Draft resolution on the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (A/C.2/48/L.28)

1.. Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia), introducing the draft resolution, announced that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Group of 77 had joined the sponsors. Given that the core issues of economic growth and development were global in nature, the United Nations, as a universal forum, had a unique role to play in promoting dialogue and partnership. He urged the Committee to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

(f) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (continued)

Draft resolution on drought and desertification (A/C.2/48/L.45)

2. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

(i) ENTREPRENEURSHIP (continued)

Draft resolution on entrepreneurship and privatization for economic growth and sustainable development (A/C.2/48/L.34)

3. Mr. MOLDAW (United States of America) introduced the draft resolution which was intended to put into effect the consensus agreements forged over recent years in the entrepreneurship and privatization initiatives. He announced that Benin, Iceland, Lithuania, Mongolia, Morocco and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had joined the sponsors.

AGENDA ITEM 99: IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Draft resolution on dissemination of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (A/C.2/48/L.46)

4. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and said that he hoped that the Committee would adopt it by consensus.

(c) SUSTAINABLE USE AND CONSERVATION OF THE MARINE LIVING RESOURCES OF THE HIGH SEAS: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS (continued)

Draft resolution on the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (A/C.2/48/L.44)

5. Mr. NANDAN (Fiji), introducing the draft resolution, said that it was essentially procedural in nature and should be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 100: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

Draft resolution on assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti (A/C.2/48/L.33)

6. Mr. BELHIMEUR (Algeria) introduced the draft resolution and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution on the special plan of economic cooperation for Central America (A/C.2/48/L.42)

7. Mr. REGALADO (El Salvador), introducing the draft resolution, announced that Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and the Russian Federation had joined the sponsors. Although significant progress had been made over the past decade, Central America was still in a critical transition period where peace was being consolidated. He expressed the hope that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 171: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF RWANDA (continued)

Draft resolution on emergency assistance for the social and economic rehabilitation of Rwanda (A/C.2/48/L.35)

8. Mr. BELHIMEUR (Algeria), introducing the draft resolution pointed out that the wording of the title and paragraph 1 should be brought into line with that of the agenda item, and that the word "materialization" in paragraph 5 should be replaced by the word "completion". He announced that Belgium, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, El Salvador, Honduras and the Republic of Korea had joined the sponsors, and expressed the hope that the Committee would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 102: ASSISTANCE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EL SALVADOR (continued)

Draft resolution on assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador (A/C.2/48/L.43)

9. Mrs. VARGAS DE JESUS (Costa Rica), introducing the draft resolution, whose sponsors had been joined by Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Jamaica, Spain and Suriname, recalled that, as the Secretary-General had noted in his report (A/48/310), El Salvador was embarking on its reconstruction process with an economic base equivalent to that of a quarter century earlier. The past 12 years of political and military conflict had seen the loss of 75,000 lives, the displacement of one half million persons, a mass exodus to other countries and the aggravation of El Salvador's structural, economic and social crisis.

10. In view of the many commitments still to be fulfilled under the Peace Agreement, the need for material and financial support, and the fact that the reconstruction of El Salvador was part of the post-conflict peace-building process advocated by the Secretary-General, the sponsors hoped the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 106: TRAINING AND RESEARCH: UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (A/48/574)

11. Mrs. WELLS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) (A/48/574), said that, in accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 47/227, the UNITAR building had been transferred to the United Nations in return for the cancellation of the Institute's debt and coverage of its financial obligations for 1992. Its headquarters had been transferred to Geneva. With regard to the Assembly's request that a liaison officer be designated to organize and coordinate activities, a senior staff member of the Office of Human Resources Management had been designated as a focal point. That arrangement, designed to realize savings, seemed to be working satisfactorily. The Secretary-General had found ways and means to continue the New York-based training programmes for delegates and still comply with paragraph 3 of the resolution requiring that funding should come from voluntary contributions, donations, special-purpose grants and executing agency overheads.

12. She drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 12 of the report, which described the Institute's current financial situation. The New York-based programmes for delegates had been continued within existing resources by using the services of a senior fellow who had organized such programmes for the Institute previously. Paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 described the programmes which had already been offered. A briefing session on the Security Council would take place from 13 to 17 December.

(Mrs. Wells)

13. Referring to paragraph 14 of the report, she said that accordingly, it was the Secretary-General's intention to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to the increasing training requirements at the organizational, international and national levels. As the representative of the Secretary-General on the UNITAR Board of Trustees, she would work closely with the newly appointed Board members to that end.

14. Mr. BOISARD (Acting Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research) said that, although the situation of UNITAR remained unstable, its administrative and financial reform process was beginning to bear fruit. The Institute currently organized some 50 programmes a year, on four continents, benefitting more than 2,000 persons. On any given working day there were, on average, two such programmes being conducted somewhere in the world. In the past two weeks alone, training programmes had been offered in Geneva and in Malawi, Zambia, Egypt, Bangladesh and Thailand. Subregional programmes were about to begin in India and Pakistan and a fellowship programme for officials from the developing countries would be offered in Nairobi at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Institute would also be sponsoring training programmes to promote the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Lithuania, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. Before the end of the year it would organize training workshops in French-speaking West Africa, Ethiopia and Cuba. All those programmes were financed from extrabudgetary resources.

15. The qualitative and quantitative development of the Institute's programmes had been achieved by concentrating on disciplines where it enjoyed a comparative advantage and by discontinuing certain programme, including non-priority programmes and programmes which were not particularly unique or valuable or whose stable financing could not be guaranteed. Reforms were being implemented on three fonts: improving existing programmes; developing new methodologies and materials; and making UNITAR, as an operational training instrument, more responsive to the needs of the United Nations system. An example of the first approach - namely, the improvement of existing programmes - was the Fellowship Programme in International Law conducted by UNITAR on behalf of the Office of Legal Affairs. The programme had been completely restructured, yielding spectacular results almost immediately: nearly 180 official applicants for 15 to 20 scholarships. UNITAR had then applied that experience to other fellowship programmes. The Fellowship Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy, for diplomats and high-level officials of the United Nations system had been extremely successful. The Fellowship Programme on Environmental Law and Policy, organized by the Institute for UNEP, had drawn 130 applications for 35 scholarships.

16. The second approach - the formulation of innovative concepts and original training methodologies - focused on specific subjects and on responding to new needs in a changing world. Thus, UNITAR had developed courses on computer systems, negotiating techniques, the legal aspects of international finance. It had prepared innovative training materials, including training software offered free of charge to developing countries, training manuals incorporating the most modern teaching methods and audiovisual materials.

(Mr. Boisard)

17. The third approach - making the Institute more responsive to the needs of the United Nations system - was beginning to bear fruit. Only months after the launching of a UNEP training programme on the implementation of legal instruments to control the international traffic in toxic products, a UNEP/UNITAR workshop had been organized in South-East Asia in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). In addition, UNEP, UNDP field offices and several newly created States or States with economies in transition, had requested the cooperation of UNITAR.

18. During its year of profound restructuring, the Institute's main concern had been to avoid a financial deficit. As a result, it had met less than one third of the requests it received and had not been able to maintain its continuing education programme in New York. That programme, however, would be a priority objective for 1994. The Board of Trustees had already received proposals in that connection and was aware of the needs and expectations of Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York.

19. It had focused on training activities at the expense of research; and had developed inter-agency cooperation. While it expected to avoid a financial deficit during the current year, it might well encounter problems in the medium term. Voluntary contributions to the General Fund currently represented less than 10 per cent of what was mobilized for projects. He appealed to Member States for urgent assistance in order to ensure the continuity and autonomy of UNITAR and to enable it to design training programmes in certain diplomatic, economic and social fields which remained relevant for some of the poorer countries.

20. Mr. VAN DE CRAEN (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Union, welcomed the fact that UNITAR had cancelled its debt, transferred its headquarters and carried out substantial restructuring. Those changes should enable it to enhance its efficiency without exceeding its financial means. It was interesting to learn that the Institute had been able to offer a greater number of programmes, particularly for developing countries, in such areas as training in international negotiation and environmental protection by using new, more effective training concepts and methodologies. The Union was pleased that UNITAR had achieved financial equilibrium in 1993, but recognized that its financial situation remained uncertain. Essentially, however, the resources that it would receive from Governments or other financing sources would depend on the success of its training programmes. Voluntary contributions would be the guarantee of its future.

21. Increased cooperation with existing institutions, primarily the International Tfaining Centre of the International Labour Organization at Turin, would be an important step in the Institute's efforts to increase its contacts with governmental, multilateral and regional organizations, bilateral cooperation agencies, foundations, institutes and universities. The European Union recognized the great importance attached by the Secretary-General to

(Mr. Van de Craen, Belgium)

strengthening the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to the growing training requirements at the international and national levels. It supported him in that conviction and welcomed the establishment of a joint United Nations/ILO task force to explore the better use of the International Training Centre at Turin for the benefit of the training programmes of the two organizations.

22. Mr. KRUEGER (Austria) said that closer cooperation between UNITAR and qualified national, regional and international institutions would be a key element in the continued and growing success of the Institute's activities. In that spirit, the Austrian Government had hosted a Fellowship Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy at Burg Schlaining, and it was ready to cooperate further in the preparation and conduct of training programmes on that crucial issue.

23. Further synergy could be achieved by combining the Institute's activities in environmental management training and training in the management of foreign affairs for newly independent States and countries in transition with already existing national programmes. The Vienna-based International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis could provide international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary analysis of such global issues as the environment, population growth and energy policy. The Institute had supported the International Council of Scientific Unions and the Third World Academy of Sciences in organizing the International Conference on an Agenda of Science for Environment and Development, which had prepared the scientific groundwork for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Diplomatic Academy in Vienna had successfully conducted short- and long-term training courses for young diplomats from newly independent States and countries in transition.

24. The reformed and streamlined UNITAR should be able to meet the growing training requirements of Member States and staff in the United Nations system in cooperation with national, regional and international institutions.

25. Mr. ALIOU (Cameroon) said that, while his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's arrangements for the continuation of the activities of UNITAR at New York, it did not consider that his designation of a focal point was in keeping with the concerns of delegations that had favoured the appointment of an official who would deal exclusively with the Institute's affairs. At the current session, the Second and Fifth Committees should give the Secretary-General the legal and financial means to establish a separate and autonomous UNITAR office in New York.

26. His delegation supported the provisions of paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 47/227 and commended the measures that had been taken to establish and strengthen cooperation with national, regional and international organizations, foundations and institutes involved in training in the fields of diplomacy and development. In that regard, his delegation looked forward to the successful outcome of the negotiations on cooperation between UNITAR and the Cameroonian Institute of International Relations.

27. Mr. ISAKOV (Russian Federation) said that, over the past 15 months, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had requested UNITAR to design and organize various training programmes, in particular in the management of foreign affairs, for newly independent States and countries in transition. That was an important area of the Institute's activities, and his delegation hoped that, at the next session of the General Assembly, a detailed presentation would be given of the work that had been carried out in that field. In 1993, there had been plans to design and implement special programmes on debt management and financial affairs for the newly independent States of Central Asia and a number of other countries. As far as possible, the number of countries whose representatives could benefit from the Institute's expertise in that area should be broadened to include other States with economies in transition.

28. His delegation fully supported the provisions regarding funding contained in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 47/227.

29. Ms. ZHANG Xiaoan (China) said that, with the conclusion of its reform activities, UNITAR should be able to implement more effectively training programmes on multilateral diplomacy as part of its continuing efforts to train personnel from developing countries. Her delegation was pleased to note that the Secretary-General had heeded Member States' request that multilateral training activities be continued in New York. In order to meet the needs of developing countries, the Secretary-General should arrange training activities in the fields of international economic cooperation, population, environment and the eradication of poverty.

30. In view of its financial constraints, UNITAR should enhance its cooperation with other organs and bodies of the United Nations system. In that regard, she welcomed the forthcoming Fellowship Programme on Environmental Law and Policy, which had been jointly organized by UNITAR and UNEP. Such activities could not only help solve the problem of limited funds but also meet demands for training in various fields.

31. Although its debt problem had basically been solved through its reform activities, the Institute still lacked sufficient resources, and the international community, in particular the developed countries, should increase its financial contributions to UNITAR. In order to support the Institute's training activities, the Chinese Government had decided to donate $10,000 to UNITAR for its 1994 programmes.

32. Mr. HORIGUCHI (Japan) said that the Government of Japan welcomed the completion of the restructuring of UNITAR in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/227, and had decided to show its support for the Institute's activities by contributing $100,000 in 1993. The size of its future contributions would depend on the financial judgement UNITAR exercised, once the changes that had just been adopted had had time to take full effect.

33. His delegation attached great importance to the strengthening of coordination between UNITAR and other qualified national and international institutions as a means of enhancing the Institute's efficiency and effectiveness. In that context, his delegation appreciated the ongoing efforts

(Mr. Horiguchi, Japan)

to coordinate the Institute's programme activities and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and hoped that the Secretary-General would keep Member States informed of their progress.

34. Another important issue for the new UNITAR was the transfer of non-training-related research functions to other appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations University (UNU). The research carried out by UNU was potentially of great value to the Organization in the formulation of policy, and the Secretariat should report as soon as possible on the Secretary-General's study of the proposal to transfer the research functions of UNITAR to UNU and should provide the budgetary implications of such a transfer.

35. Mr. ONONAIYE (Nigeria) expressed the hope that the new Board of Trustees of UNITAR would meet soon and take a more active role in the design, orientation and execution of the Institute's programmes. His delegation assumed that the downgrading of the post of Executive Director of UNITAR reflected a desire to contain operational costs.

36. Referring to paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/574), he said that the functions of a focal point were clearly at variance with those required of the liaison officer referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 47/227. The Institute's mandate in New York could best be fulfilled by the appointment of a distinct liaison officer, and the immediate action should be taken to do so. The Institute's mandate should be further strengthened through the use of full-time senior fellows, as called for in the UNITAR Statute.

37. In its resolution 47/227, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General, in the context of the ongoing restructuring process of the United Nations, to continue his work of a comprehensive review of the research capacity of the United Nations system and to make proposals for the enhancement of that capacity. However, care should be taken to distinguish between different kinds of research, including research relating to training, and research done at academic institutions, including UNU. The UNITAR Statute provided for research activity carried out by bodies free from day-to-day pressures, which possessed the practical experience and expertise in their subjects of research. There was no financial or policy consideration that would demand the termination of such research; all that was required was better control.

38. Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan) said that, in spite of its problems, UNITAR had done extremely useful work. Its training activities at Geneva were commendable and had been useful to Member States. Her delegation hoped that similar activities would continue in New York for the benefit of the United Nations and members of the Permanent Missions.

39. Her delegation expressed concern at the incomplete implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/227, in particular with regard to the establishment of a clearly defined liaison office in New York and the

(Ms. Janjua, Pakistan)

continuation of the research work done by the full-time senior fellows. Her delegation was concerned that the United Nations had been slow to make use of the services of Senior Fellows in accordance with the UNITAR Statute, especially since their services had no financial implications for the United Nations system. It appeared that a unilateral decision had been taken to refuse the senior fellows in New York permission to apply for private grants in order to carry out their research activities. The Secretariat must ensure the full implementation of Assembly resolution 47/227, which stressed the need for drawing on the services of the senior fellows. That was especially important in view of the decision of the Institute's Board of Trustees that senior fellows should contribute to the important work carried out by UNITAR in the field of research and analysis. The final decision on that matter should be left to the Board of Trustees when it met in February 1994.

40. Mr. Rysiński (Poland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

41. Mr. FERRARIN (Italy) drew attention to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report by the Secretary-General (A/48/574) and said that his Government welcomed the establishment of a joint United Nations/ILO task force to identify possible uses of the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin for their organizations' training programmes. The task force had recommended direct talks between UNITAR and the Centre to identify specific areas of cooperation in existing programmes and to examine possible joint training initiatives, particularly in the fields of peace-keeping, peacemaking, humanitarian affairs and human rights. To facilitate interaction, the task force had proposed assigning some UNITAR staff to the Centre, where they would run existing UNITAR programmes and propose and implement joint educational activities. He would welcome details from the Secretariat on the most recent contacts between the two organizations.

42. In April 1993, the Secretary-General had recommended that the Centre should evolve into a so-called "staff college" that would coordinate and stimulate a network of institutions in a broad spectrum of priority areas, and had expressed his conviction that such joint efforts would help create synergy and contribute to a common culture among various branches, programmes and agencies.

43. UNDP should assist by seconding staff to the Centre and providing financial resources, so as to support the development and expansion of the Centre's current training activities, particularly those designed to build national capacities and enhance development management, for which his country already provided generous financial support.

44. Mrs. SCOTT (Jamaica) said that UNITAR must continue to receive the necessary support and attention which would place it on a sound financial footing and strengthen its capacity to respond to the needs of Member States. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of permanent missions in New York. Her delegation noted with concern the Secretary-General's admission that the financial situation of the Institute remained very fragile.

(Mrs. Scott, Jamaica)

45. Her delegation welcomed efforts being made to coordinate programme activities and strengthen cooperation with existing institutions. The functions of research and study were particularly essential as the United Nations was increasingly being called upon to embark on largely uncharted grounds. Her delegation also looked forward to the intensification of the research activities of the United Nations University.

46. Mr. ROBLES (Mexico) said that despite the difficulties faced during its restructuring, UNITAR had continued to carry out extensive work, particularly in such areas of interest for the developing countries as the environment, debt and disaster reduction. In view of its precarious financial situation, support for the Institute was crucial, and General Assembly resolution 47/227 should be fully implemented.

47. Given the importance of training activities in New York, steps should be taken to establish a liaison officer post there. The senior fellowship programme provided valuable research input for the work of the United Nations, and it should be borne in mind that the programme did not entail any financial burden for the Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 41: EMERGENCY INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR PEACE, NORMALCY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF WAR-STRICKEN AFGHANISTAN (A/48/323 and Add.1)

48. Mr. HOSSEINI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that no country in recent history had undergone the hardships that the people of Afghanistan had experienced. Even before the war, the country's resources and economic opportunities had been limited and foreign occupation and a civil war spanning more than 14 years had further reduced the country's meagre resources.

49. The restoration of essential services, reactivation of local economies, resettlement of refugees and clearance of mines were crucial tasks which required the support of the international community. A plan was urgently needed to mobilize financial, technical and material assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction. His delegation supported the decision by the Secretary-General to dispatch a team of experts to evaluate the situation and to prepare a comprehensive report on requirements for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country. The Action Plan for Immediate Rehabilitation should serve as the starting point for a rehabilitation strategy to be presented to a conference of donors by early 1994.

50. Mr. Mongbe (Benin) resumed the Chair.

51. Mr. BATU (Turkey) said that despite the heartening changes which had occurred in the political situation in Afghanistan in 1992, continuing hostilities had slowed the process of political normalization. His delegation appealed to all sides to refrain from using force and to commit themselves to resolving their differences peacefully in order to allow the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country to proceed.

(Mr. Batu, Turkey)

52. His delegation was sponsoring a draft resolution on the item, which appealed to all Member States in a position to do so to provide all possible financial, technical and material assistance for the repatriation and settlement of Afghan refugees and displaced persons and for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The international community should respond generously to the Secretary-General's appeal for humanitarian assistance. He commended all the United Nations humanitarian agencies taking part in the emergency programme for their strenuous efforts to remedy the situation in Afghanistan and help to resolve the refugee issue.

53. The draft resolution also sought United Nations assistance in monitoring general elections to be held in Afghanistan in 1994 and requested the presence of the United Nations in the cease-fire monitoring mechanism to be supervised by observers of member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. A peaceful atmosphere conducive to free and fair elections, enhanced by international support, would pave the way for the establishment of democracy and stability in Afghanistan and, hence, for regional peace and security.

54. Mr. MOLDAW (United States of America) said that massive international assistance and multilateral aid continued to be required for a variety of reconstruction programmes in Afghanistan. His country had played a major role in providing emergency humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance to that war-torn country, through multilateral and bilateral channels. It expected its contribution to the general appeal for 1993 to be comparable to those of previous years.

55. Security risks continued to hamper efforts to deliver aid to those in need, particularly displaced persons, and he drew attention, in that connection, to the need for mine clearance activities. They were essential for the safe repatriation of refugees and would enhance prospects for political stability and economic development.

56. As peace and stability were unlikely in the near-term, an international pledging conference on aid to Afghanistan would not be constructive at the current time. His delegation therefore urged the Secretary-General to send a special mission to Afghanistan to discuss with a broad range of Afghan leaders what role, if any, the United Nations could play in facilitating national reconciliation.

57. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) expressed his delegation's appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations system to provide assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The task facing that country was monumental, for its social fabric and economic life had been devastated and its institutions and physical infrastructure had been completely destroyed during a cruel 14-year war.

58. Over six million refugees had begun the arduous process of repatriation; that process was seriously impeded by the presence of land mines. The mine-clearance programme launched by the United Nations therefore was of critical importance for the return of refugees and for the revival of local

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

economies. Noting that $3.6 million was required for the programme to continue, he said that that sum must be made available immediately.

59. The international community was morally obligated to respond generously to the urgent need for humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance for Afghanistan. It was inappropriate to make the provision of assistance for reconstruction conditional on the resolution of struggles within the country; that would prolong the suffering of the Afghan people and overlook the fact that large parts of the country were completely peaceful. His country had recently pledged its continued support for the reconstruction process and sincerely hoped that the international community would respond decisively and swiftly to the Consolidated Appeal for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance for Afghanistan and to the new appeal to be launched soon.

60. Mrs. VARGAS DE JESUS (Costa Rica) said that the current situation in Afghanistan was one of the most anguished the world was experiencing. The international community must respond to that tragedy, and even the moral support of countries unable to offer more was valuable. Assistance for the reconstruction of that war-torn country must not be denied on the grounds that hostilities were continuing.

61. Mr. ISAKOV (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation's participation in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and the strengthening of its economic stability had been discussed in detail during the visit of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to Afghanistan in September 1993. The two sides had agreed to resume work on a bilateral Commission on Economic and Scientific and Technological Cooperation and to conduct official negotiations between the relevant departments of the two countries to determine specific areas for bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

62. His delegation supported the provisions of the draft resolution on emergency international assistance to Afghanistan, which called on the international financial institutions and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to mobilize financial, technical and material assistance to Afghanistan. In that regard, the proposal to expand the UNDP Action Plan for Immediate Rehabilitation into a large-scale strategy for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan, as well as the convening of a conference of donor countries and international financial organizations deserved support.

63. The Russian Federation was interested in the speedy stabilization of the political situation in Afghanistan, a traditional trading partner. That and the successful conduct of elections in Afghanistan under United Nations supervision was a prerequisite for the normalization of the situation in the region as a whole and would help attract international assistance and investments in Afghanistan.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.